

Grafton Historical Notes

(20)

By T. R. V.

Very soon after the clearing of the land and the growing of the first small crops of grain, the pioneers of Haldimand began to build mills. As early as 1817, according to the Atlas there were three grist and four saw mills in the township. As the industry was dependent upon water for power the first mills were invariably built near streams, of which the county possessed an abundant supply. Numerous mill dams, resembling military earthworks, may still be traced throughout the country-side. Unlike the vanished buildings that once stood by them, these mute reminders of the early days of the industry will long remain to mark the spot of their former usefulness. Owing to the destruction of the forests, some of the many streams flowing into the lake from the north are not as large as they were in the days when they turned the heavy mill-wheels; but for the most part they may still repeat with some show of truth; especially during the spring freshets,

"Men may come and men may go
But I go on forever."

According to the late Miss Susan Greeley's reminiscences published in the Ontario Historical Society's "Papers and Records," 1926, the earliest saw and grist mill in the township was built in the late 1790's by her father, Aaron Greeley. Mr. Cartwright, the Kingston merchant, also had a mill in Haldimand, but sold it to David McGregor Rogers, who, in turn, sold it before moving to Haldimand (Grafton) about the year 1805. It is impossible to verify the locations of these mills but it is probable that one or both were in the vicinity of the Greeley property on Lot 2 in the second Concession. There is a tradition that Greeley's mill was built on the Shelter Valley stream.

The earliest mill in the neighbourhood of Grafton appears to have been built by Stephen Hare, the Loyalist progenitor of the well-known present day family. Until a short time ago the site of this mill on Lot 27, Con-

cession 1 was plainly visible. The "Star" of July 29, 1842 is quoted. No. 1, describing the Harbour, states that in 1843, 3063 barrels of flour were exported, much of this flour being undoubtedly manufactured in the McTavish Mill. It is probable that McTavish operated the mill until his tragic death in 1857. The property passed through several hands but the building has not been standing for many years. The dam, and the depression where the mill-pond stood may still be clearly discerned. The site of the building was directly in front of the barn on the present property north of the highway, some yards east of Benlock bridge.

It would be difficult to find a small stream that in such a comparatively short time has had so many mills built on it, as the stream flowing through Shelter Valley. At one period it must have been almost a continuous village as far as Vernonville. At the lower end, near the Harbour, stood the Plaster mill owned by Bingley, Godard, Lumley and others. Then came the McTavish mill, above mentioned. Next came a Tannery, and close by it stood Massey's mill. Greenwood's Woolen Mill stood next in line. At this mill, where at one time thirty workers were employed, cloth, blankets and other woollen products were manufactured. At Taylor's mill pumps and pump-logs, pails and cheese boxes were made.

An extensive list of articles manufactured at Card's Cabinet and Pump Factory and Saw Mill was advertised in the "Cobourg World" of April 10, 1885. On the N. E. branch of the stream were Gillisple's grist mill and Broomfield's saw mill, while White's grist and saw-mill (still standing) was situated on the N. W. branch. Others were Gillard's mill, Ziba Harnden's saw mill, Wm. Broomfield's saw mill and Ghent's mill. Thus this little stream has provided the power for at least fourteen mills. Lot 26 on the second concession was part of the Roger's Crown grant in 1799. Daniel Massey bought part

Chevrolet

Chevrolet are on display at local and production from Oshawa. Substantial rate orders has been interest in the models for 1935. Shows.

Conspicuous Master m turret-top bod been a leader among motor the 1935 design advance announce top" is a shiny steel, extending windshield we of the rear v welded to the strength of th and reinforced of heavy gua the sides to t

The body is consisting of gether and br is one panel each for the c sides. The bod a single stan the front to t of this steel p form the toe

Following a and the weldin material is a inch of the me is covered wi deadener that from the eng noises. The fl is covered wit A layer of co to increase ab the under side walls. This with the prot air space betw headlining, p cold drafts body. The "tu protection fro mer sun, for absorbs the s that the "turt

A-Grafton
(07-04)

locations of these mills but it is probable that one or both were in the vicinity of the Greeley property on Lot 2 in the second Concession. There is a tradition that Greeley's mill was built on the Shelter Valley stream.

The earliest mill in the neighbourhood of Grafton appears to have been built by Stephen Hare, the Loyalist progenitor of the well-known present day family. Until a short time ago the site of this mill on Lot 27, Concession 1 was plainly visible. The elder Hare died in 1845 at the age of 90, but it is probable that his sons Richard and John ran the mill for a time previous to this.

Eliakim Barnum, neighbour to the Hares, appears to have operated a mill in connection with his distillery. An old mill stone still lies by the broken dam.

A mill once stood on the Heenan property, south and east of St. Mary's Church, but no one knows who built or operated it.

In 1836 Donald McTavish bought from Benjamin Ewing the property known as "Benlock" and proceeded to erect a mill on it. The "Star" of Mar. 7, 1838 has the following advertisement:—

"Cash for Wheat

At Ness-Side Mills near Grafton."

The subscribers beg to intimate to the inhabitants of Haldimand and the neighbouring townships that they will be ready to grind all kinds of custom-work, and also to flour for the foreign market in course of this month. The most approved machinery, and best materials and workmanship have been put into every department of the mill with separate stones and bolts for making rye, corn and barley meal, and all being done under the superintendence of an experienced Miller, the customers can rely on every justice being done to their grists, and those who wish to make superfine flour, may confidently calculate on having as good an article manufactured, as can be produced from any mill in the Province. The highest cash prices paid for good wheat at the mill.

Ness-Side Mills.

March 7, 1838.

D. McTavish and Co."

Readers of these notes will find further reference to this mill in No. 8, in which an article from the Co-

stream were Gillispie's grist mill and Broomfield's saw mill, while White's grist and saw-mill (still standing) was situated on the N. W. branch. Others were Gillard's mill, Ziba Harnden's saw mill, Wm. Broomfield's saw mill and Ghent's mill. Thus this little stream has provided the power for at least fourteen mills.

Lot 26 on the second concession was part of the Roger's Crown grant in 1799. Daniel Massey bought part of the 200 acre block in 1822 and after passing through several hands it came into the possession of Joseph Coulson in 1844. Mr. Coulson (grandfather of J. W. Roberts of Grafton) had been a miller in Shelter Valley and while it is not definitely established, it is probable that the picturesquely situated mill was built by him. This old building which

"has ground its corn and paid its tax" for nearly a century is now operated by Mr. Fred Cole, a Cornishman, and is probably the oldest mill property still in use in the township. The massive timbers of this building tell of a day when big trees were more common than they are at present.

It is not difficult to trace the gradual disappearance of these mills. The era of the wooden ship which reached its climax in this country between 1820 and 1880 demanded vast quantities of lumber. Plank roads needed substantial timbers. But with the passing of the wind-jammer, the discovery of improved methods of road building, the increased use of brick and stone for construction work, and the thinning of the forest as the basic industry of lumbering gave way to agriculture, the lessened need of the small saw mill was a foregone conclusion.

The flour milling industry had alternating periods of success and failure. From 1843-46, for example, American grain flowed into Canada West and after being ground to flour was sent to the European market. An Imperial statute of 1846 spelled the ruin of this international trade and many millers lost all their capital. With the building of the railway and the opening up of the limitless western prairie lands with their adaptability to wheat growing the local flour mill was much less needed.

A layer of coal to increase ab the under side walls. This with the prot air space betw headlining, p cold drafts body. The "tu protection from mer sun, for absorbs the s that the "turt only one-half a type at roof l

Thus the dri protected by s insulated from outside shock, noises. The "turret top" possibility of t which are cost

Besides the "Chevrolet mode striking advance trim, revealing style for Chev the efficient flame" motor; a lubrication; im led brakes; in knee-action fro longer wheelb teriors; and i Draft Ventilati

Ha

Mrs. Neil Bri visiting her par Young, has retu Roseneath.

Master Omar in Nicholls hosp for the past brought home c

Mr. and Mrs. Billie of Colborr home of the f and Mrs. W. O.

Mrs. Eric Ke with influenza under the care neath, was brou and is getting

Mrs. Jas. Dro bourg General home on Wedn ported to be p

Mr. and Mrs. Dinah Robins Sunday at the Earl Shearer.

Miss Olive spent Sunday a Mr. and Mrs of Peterbourg

FRANKNESS

There is no argument in favour of

Such being the case, it seems but justice, if it be true, as most observers believe, that syphilis was brought back to Europe by the earliest dis-